

## **Bishop Alexander Walters, D.D.**

**A. M. E. Zion Church**

**Residence: New York City, N. Y.**

BISHOP WALTERS presides over the conferences of New England, North Carolina, the Dominican Republic, and West Africa. He was born in Bardstown, Ky., August 1, 1858. He attended public schools for eight years, and later graduated from a theological school in California. Previous to his theological studies he worked in hotels, and on steamboats in Kentucky.

He joined the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1870, was licensed to preach in 1877, joined the Kentucky Conference in 1878, was elected assistant secretary of the conference in 1880, and secretary in 1882. In 1883 he was transferred to San Francisco, and three years later returned to the South and was stationed in Tennessee. Later he served four years as pastor of the "Mother Zion Church," New York City.

Dr. Walters attended the World's First Sunday-School Convention in London, 1887, as the representative of the New York Conference and Sunday-School Association. He visited several European countries, also Egypt and the Holy Land. In 1890, Livingstone College, Salisbury, N. C., gave him the degree of D.D.

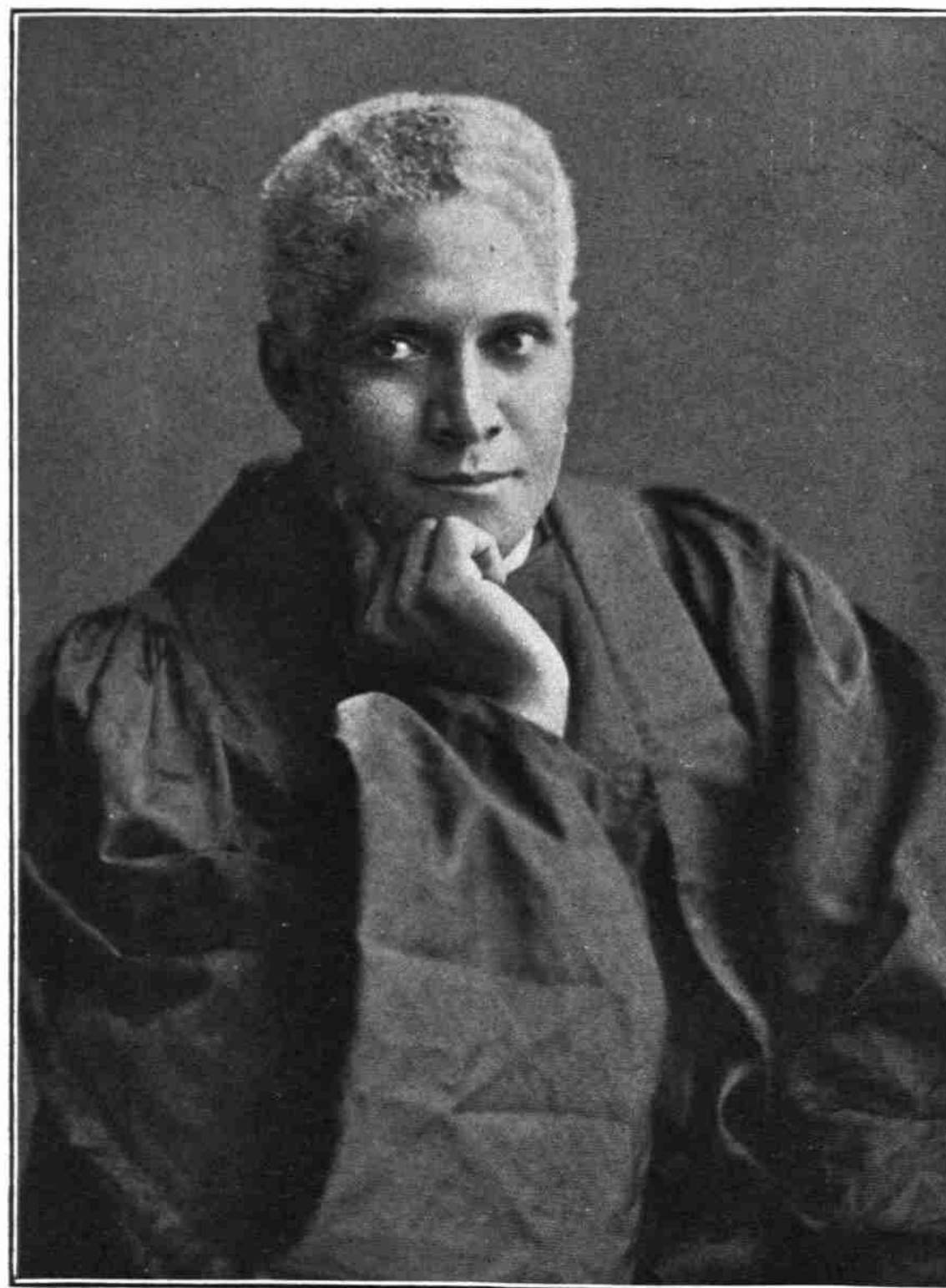
He was a member of the General Conference of his church from 1884 until his election as bishop in 1892, an honor rarely conferred upon so young a man. He was a member of the Ecumenical Conference in 1891.

In 1895, the bishop was elected a trustee of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, and has continued in this service to the present day.

He has been president since 1898, with the exception of one year, of the African-American Council, an organization "for the amelioration of the condition of the Negroes in America." At the Pan-American Conference, which met in London in July, 1900, Bishop Walters was unanimously elected president for two years. This organization embraces in its membership representatives from all countries having Africans or those of African descent as subjects, and the position of president carries with it a world-wide influence with the race.

### **Greatest Needs of the Negro Race**

ONE of the most urgent needs of the race is the further development of the home life; great progress has been made within the last forty years in the esthetic and material advancement of the Negro home, but there is a crying need for more homes in which right principles of living are inculcated and better discipline maintained.



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Our preachers and teachers — indeed, all our leaders — should emphasize home training; next to this we should urge the parents to send their children to Sunday-school and to the church and thus put them early under the beneficial influence of religious training, for it is the consensus of opinion that Christianity is the greatest saving agency in all the world. The study of the Bible is a most important factor. The thoughtful members of my race appreciate the splendid work you and your associates are doing to assist in our moral, spiritual, and educational uplift. The interest manifested on your part means a great deal to our cause at this time when so much is being said and done to retard the progress of the black man.

Another important need is better schools, more in number, competent teachers, and longer terms. The safety of a race or nation is in the enlightenment of its people. I am of the opinion that, in proportion as the American people become educated and Christian-

ized, in that proportion will prejudice with all its direful consequences be eliminated.

Another need of the race in its uplift is the further encouragement of industry and the habit of frugality. Our boys and girls, like the boys and girls of all other races, must be taught the dignity of labor. This can be done by creating such a sentiment against idleness that the coming generation will be ashamed not to work. Honesty and patriotism must be inculcated. This work can be advanced by more ethical instruction in the public schools; the establishment of industrial and reform schools in the districts where there are none, and by the study of the Bible, which always teaches honesty and the highest type of patriotism, the ideal Christian citizenship.

We need the aid of our white friends in the creation of sentiment in favor of unrestricted labor opportunities for the black man — the opening of doors now closed to him because of race prejudice. The black man wants the opportunity to do any work for which he is fitted.

It is the duty of the members and friends of our race to labor as zealously to change these unfavorable conditions as others have done to bring them about.